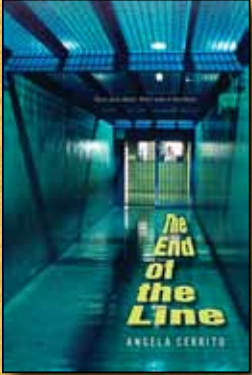


THE END OF THE LINE

BY **Angela Cerrito**



“Riveting debut. . . A thought-provoking look at culpability and grief.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*

If Robbie wants to survive, he must confront the truth: he is a murderer.

Ages 12 up HC: 978-0-8234-2287-6

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The author used the technique of alternating chapters, jumping between Robbie’s history with Ryan from the moment they first met and Robbie’s experiences at Great Oaks School (Prison). Why do you think the author chose this writing technique? Did you think it was an effective way to tell a story? Why or why not?

Robbie was very angry for a number of reasons, which led to his accidentally killing Ryan. What were the things in Robbie’s life that made him so angry? What would have been some alternative ways he could have handled his anger?

Robbie’s beloved Uncle Grant was going off to fight in the Iraq war, and it was very difficult to say good-bye. Do you think “Good luck” was a good thing to say? Why or why not? How have you dealt with the situation when a loved one has to leave—either to go to war or for another reason? What are the best ways to say good-bye?

Ryan acted like a different person when he was interacting with the little kids in Robbie’s mom’s day care center and again when he was helping a strange woman with her crying baby. Why do you think this happened? Why did Ryan act differently with very young children?

Why do you think Robbie and Ryan became friends? What did they like about each other?

Is murder or youth violence ever justified? Why or why not? What about capital punishment? What can be done to prevent violence among young people?

Robbie was a long-distance runner, which was very important to him. How did running and preparing for races help Robbie? Do you think it is important for young people to be involved in sports? Why or why not? Has being involved in a sport ever helped you with problems you may have had? How?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Angela Cerrito was born in Michigan and now lives in Germany, where she works as a physical therapist. This is her first book. For more about Angela, visit www.angelacerrito.com/angela-cerrito.html.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Language Arts

During Robbie’s stay at Great Oaks School (Prison) he was ordered by Mr. Lester to make many lists. Students can make similar lists of their own, for example:

- Make a list of who you are. (I am _____.)
- Make a list of steps in solving a problem you may have.
- Make a list of the things you want.
- Make a list of what it takes to have a real friendship.
- Make a list of all the schools you have attended and how you felt about them.

History/Geography/Social Science

Students can use a world map or an atlas to locate Iraq and Tikrit, where Uncle Grant went to fight.

Ask students to do research on the Iraq war using materials from the library or online resources. This can include finding the causes of the war, exploring varying opinions on whether it was justified or not, the reactions of some Americans who were against the war, and other issues and questions students may have.

Students can do research on youth violence and bullying, which are both big issues in today’s schools. What causes these things? How can they be prevented?

WEB LINKS

News Hour Extra

www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/teachers/iraq/
Provides links to a wealth of lesson plans and other materials for teachers on the Iraq war, created by PBS.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

<http://consensus.nih.gov/2004/2004YouthViolencePreventionSOS023.html.htm>
An in-depth discussion of youth violence, and suggestions for combating it.

www.thecoolspot.gov/documents/peerpressurebagoftricks.pdf
Provides a lesson plan with various scenarios for students to enact dealing with peer pressure.

National Association of Students Against Violence Everywhere

www.nationalsave.org/main/justforeducators.php
Links to activities to help end youth violence, presented by SAVE (Students Against Violence Everywhere).

